

July 17, 2009

*\$201,600 Grant for GEAR UP Program will Help Low-Income High School Students Prepare for College*

Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Ben Ray Luján announced a grant of \$201,600 for the Chama Valley Independent School District's Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) that helps low income students prepare for college.

"I'm encouraged that the Chama Valley Independent School District received this important grant to help prepare students for college," said Rep. Luján. "We must continue to focus on preparing all students throughout their schooling so we can reduce the dropout rate, teach our students the skills they need to succeed, and get them ready to participate in our workforce."

The Chama Valley Independent School District serves a rural district where 73 percent of the students receive free or reduced-cost lunches. This discretionary grant will allow the school to expand its curriculum to include subjects such as pre-algebra, advanced science, and

mathematics courses.

“I am proud of the accomplishments of the Chama Valley Independent School District, which serves so many of our young people. This funding will provide many exciting and important opportunities for our students” said Rep. Luján.

According to the United States Department of Education, this discretionary grant program is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP grantees serves students, beginning no later than the seventh grade, and follow them through high school. GEAR UP funds are also used to provide college scholarships to low-income students.